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Before the FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of )

Advanced Television Systems )  
and Their Impact upon the )  
Existing Television Broadcast )  
Service

MM Docket No. 87-268

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COMMENTS OF Jeffrey W. Gnagey  
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

WIWU-LP51 has a tremendous interest in what happens as an outcome of the Sixth Further Notice Proposed Rule Making of the FCC regarding Advanced Television or DTV. The station and the University has a commitment to providing quality local programming to the citizen of Grant County, Indiana. We provide more than 45,000 television households with over twenty hours per week of local programs which are of interest to the Grant county community. Some examples of this programming include the broadcasting of the performances of the Marion Philharmonic Orchestra, live coverage of men's and women's basketball from the University, a weekly news and public affairs program hosted by a journalist with thirty years experience with a local Marion newspaper. Many others are listed later on in these comments. Another function of WIWU-LP51 is that it provides college students with hands-on experience and employment in the area of broadcast television which makes their studies and degree more marketable upon graduation from the University. The Communications Arts program as well as others benefit greatly by the opportunities which are provided to students in the area of television broadcasting. We currently employ between eighteen and twenty-five students part time who participate in program creation and the operation of WIWU-LP51. Additionally, interns and independent study students complete course work at the station. This experience cannot be replaced. Only employment experience in a broadcast facility can provide a real world experience which our students take with them into the job market upon graduation from the University.

Our viewers have come to depend on us for programming and the University tries to provide the community with positive and constructive programming in an effort to give something back for continued support from the people in the community.

The current ATV/DTV proposal as outline in the Sixth Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making of the FCC would in effect eliminate our operation as a broadcast station. Upon removal of channels 60-69 our auxiliary broadcast license WMU-205, Channel 61, which functions as our studio to transmitter (STL) link would be taken off the air. In effect we would go silent. Even if we

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were able to change that frequency assignment to a lower UHF channel, our operation after the DTV allotment table goes into effect would be limited. Although the proposed DTV channel assignments would not directly replace WIWU-LP51, channel 23 "Marion" in Indianapolis has been assigned channel 54 as its DTV frequency. According to current FCC taboos, intermodulation interference rules may or may not require our discontinuing operation on channel 51. Even if the FCC taboos, on interference were to be modified (which we are in favor of) our existence as a broadcast station would discontinue when the transition to DTV is completed. Once the NTSC broadcasting operations have ceased, we will cease. We believe the Commission should amend its proposed rules to preserve Low Power Community Broadcasting and the local programming it provides temporarily as NTSC Broadcasters but, eventually as DTV Broadcasters.

When I started in broadcasting in the late 70's we were taught we had a privilege and a responsibility to use the airwaves which belong to the public, in their interest. We honored this by operating broadcast stations in a way which provided for the public interest. Even though this has diminished from a legislative standpoint, WIWU-LP51 strives to provide our local public with programs that are in their interest and of value to the Grant County community. We provide coverage of local news and public affairs in a weekly program entitled "Perspectives." We are in the process of developing a nightly news program in cooperation with the communications program at the University to provide even more in depth coverage of local news. As referred to earlier we provide broadcast coverage of the local civic orchestra, school system spelling bees and a children's reading program which hosts local public school teachers and their classes to promote reading and the value of reading. We produce weekly programs which include the instruction of painting with watercolors, guidelines for family living, discussions with local high school and college coaches regarding men's and women's sports, and live election returns from a local perspective. A full power broadcaster does exist who is licensed for Marion, Indiana. However, their tower is located 30 miles southwest of Marion and their studios are located in Indianapolis, which is 75 miles away. WNDY Channel 23 or "Indy" TV does no local programming concerning Marion, Indiana. As you can see by eliminating community broadcasters such as ourselves you in effect put an end to programming which is local in its coverage and its interest.

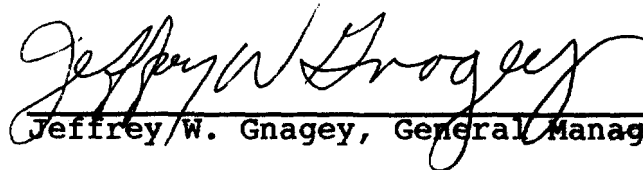
WIWU-LP51 endorses the consensus technical proposal which the Community Broadcasting Association (CBA) has put forth which would preserve the spectrum space for low power broadcasters, and which would protect full power broadcasters. In addition, we support the initiatives of the CBA on behalf of all community broadcasters which would eventually allow our inclusion into the digital broadcasting conversion. Further, we would urge the FCC to preserve the commitment to the public interest on a truly local level by preserving broadcasters who truly serve the local

public interest.

WHEREFORE, for the foregoing reasons, this petitioner respectfully requests that the Commission revise the rules and policies proposed in the Sixth Further Notice to, as described above, by incorporating the consensus technical proposals as submitted by the Community Broadcasting Association and by preserving low power broadcasters who serve the local public interest.

Respectfully submitted,

WIWU-LP51, IWU COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

  
Jeffrey W. Gnagey, General Manager